



# THE mEMo



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## Pamlico County Acquisitions are First Mitigation Activity for Hurricane Irene

*By Sharon Winstead and Nick Burk, NCEM Hazard Mitigation*

Sixteen families in Pamlico County will soon rest a bit easier when severe storms strike knowing their homes will be out of the flood plain. All 16 homeowners were displaced by Hurricane Irene and spent several months living in FEMA temporary housing units after their homes were destroyed.

NCEM and Pamlico County executed a \$2.4 million grant agreement earlier this spring to buy the homes. Designated FEMA funds cover 75%, the remaining 25% is funded by NCEM with money designated for Hurricane Irene recovery efforts.

The project, which was awarded by FEMA April 30, marks the earliest award of a newly-developed FEMA mitigation project to North Carolina. Traditionally, the deadline to *submit* mitigation grant requests to FEMA is *one year*

*after* the disaster declaration. However, due to the extraordinary devastation and housing issues in Pamlico County, the county, NCEM and FEMA worked as a coordinated team to conduct outreach, in depth benefit-cost analysis, grant writing, and federal pre-award coordination to conduct an early submittal and award of the project.

“To me, to have a grant agreement in May 2012 that I can start accessing in a couple of weeks, is a real feat,” said Jayne Robb, county planner and economic developer. “It’s a miracle in itself and it’s a testament to the hard work at the Hazard Mitigation part of North Carolina Emergency Management, FEMA and this office. If you look at Hurricane Isabel, which occurred in 2003, we closed the grant out in 2008. That’s how long this stuff can take. We’re trying to do better. We’re trying to find a faster way to do it without missing any requirements.”

Now that the grant agreement has been signed, homeowners will have the pre-Irene fair market value assessed for their homes. If the homeowners choose to continue in the program,



*Two of the 16 homes that have been approved for the post-Hurricane Irene mitigation project in Pamlico County.*

they likely will close on their properties during the summer.

The Hazard Mitigation Branch also is working to conduct detailed benefit-cost analysis on 900 properties across the disaster impact zone—by far the largest caseload since Hurricane Floyd. However, only cost effective properties for the disaster will qualify for the program. In addition, the amount of funding for Hurricane Irene is much more limited than it was for Floyd. Results for the Irene analysis are expected shortly, and additional grant proposals will be submitted to FEMA for acquisition, elevation and other mitigation projects.

“This project truly proves that ‘there is no ‘I’ in team’,” concluded Sharon Winstead, NCEM Mitigation Specialist for the Pamlico pilot project. “Everyone worked exceptionally well together to develop and bring this project to fruition.”

## Would you think twice?

*By Rick Boettinger, NCEM*

You are standing in line to pay for new lawn mower blades at your local hardware store. Two customers in front of you purchase 500 pounds of an extremely dangerous and caustic, but legal, chemical. Would you give this a second thought?

Getting to know your partners and what they sell is part of the Bomb Making Materials Awareness Program (BMAP) that was taught to more than 150 North Carolina first responders May 8 and 10.

Sponsored by NC State Bureau of Investigation and the Asheville and Charlotte police and fire departments, the class teaches participants to recognize precursors to a possible terrorist attack. The one-day Department of Homeland Security course is taught by the Office of Bombing Prevention as an outreach program for first responders and private partners. The course taught participants how to educate the public about identifying traits and information that may

lead to stopping an attack during its most vulnerable time periods: the planning and gathering of materials. Detailed investigations have revealed that most attacks can be thwarted in their infancy by ordinary individuals asking themselves the five W’s: who, what, when, where and why. For instance:

- Who is this person?
- What products and/or materials is the person buying? (Example: two cases of hydrogen peroxide, five tons of anhydrous ammonia, or 500 pounds of scrap metal)
- When does an individual need to buy these traditional and/or nontraditional products?
- Where are they going to use this product?
- Why does this person need this? Why are they paying in cash if they are a business?

These simple questions can determine if these purchases are for legitimate reasons or something more sinister. Your answers could be the warning signs that someone is creating a threat that may affect you and your community.

Compare it to the ‘sniff test.’ If it doesn’t add up, something is wrong. None of these acts by themselves are illegal. But, if it doesn’t seem right, emergency and law enforcement officials want to know.

If you see something, report it! A physical description, name or vehicle description could help prevent a disaster. Contact your local law enforcement agency or NC ISAAC, 919-716-1111 or 888-624-7222 or [ISAAC@ncdoj.gov](mailto:ISAAC@ncdoj.gov).

## Mark Your Calendars

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|------------|---|
| June 13    | EM/Dept. of Defense Annual Summit - Raleigh |
| June 26    | EM Forum - Raleigh                          |
| October 14 | NCEMA Fall Conference - Hickory             |

## **NCEM-ECU Conference summary**

*By Charles Tripp, NCEM Area Coordinator*

With the beginning of hurricane season a week away, and the remnants of Alberto passing the North Carolina coast, the stage was set for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual ECU Hurricane Workshop.

More than 120 emergency management officials, meteorologists and university researchers gathered May 23 in Greenville to discuss trends and scientific developments in weather forecasting and the emergency management field.

Other focal points included an interactive session on Social Media use in emergency management, the use of maps and graphics and Hurricane Irene actions. The sessions provided the response and management community new concepts and information that may assist them in future weather events.



Bill Read, director of the National Hurricane Center, was the key note speaker. Director Read discussed the accomplishments the National Hurricane Center has made in hurricane forecasting and how those improvements aid federal, state and local agencies in their decision making process.

The annual workshop is a collaborative effort by NCEM, East Carolina University Center for Natural Hazards Research and RENCi to keep federal, state, local and private agencies partners informed about the latest developments and information in hurricane preparedness and response.

*National Hurricane Center director Bill Read discusses hurricane forecasts at the NCEM-ECU Annual Hurricane conference in Greenville. Mr. Read retired as the director of the NHC in early June.*




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## **Burke County Mass Casualty and Dirty Bomb Exercise**

*by Gary Jones, NCEMA Executive Director*

On a dreary, rainy May morning 130 responders from Burke County participated in an emergency exercise that involved various response activities at four separate locations across the county.

The multi-faceted exercise began with a house fire at a trailer park. When firefighters responded and EMS personnel treated injured adults and children, they discovered chemical hazards and dirty bomb components. Several mock explosions spread radioactive contamination across the area, complicating response efforts. As suspects fled the scene of the trailer park fire they crashed into a middle school ball field, injuring students and parents



and contaminating a second site with radioactive materials. The scenario became even more complex as the injured, contaminated patients were transported to two different hospitals for treatment.

“We wanted to involve a wide variety of county and municipal responders as well as local public health personnel,” said Mark Pitts, Burke County emergency management director.

Rain added unexpected complexity to the exercise as victims lay on wet pavement and crews worked to contain runoff from the decontamination efforts. Also, some victims were transported to local hospitals before any hazardous material threats were discovered, thus increasing contamination concerns for the hospital and adding decontamination responsibilities for medical staff.

Members of the emergency management and public health communities came together nearly a year ago to begin planning the exercise. Pitts said representatives from the Burke County Sheriff’s and Health departments were critical to the planning and development of the comprehensive exercise. In January, the team held a table-top exercise to run through the scenario.

Rebecca McLeod, assistant county health director, said both the advance planning and coordination activities, as well as the full scale exercise, were beneficial.

“Both efforts provided responders and health workers with a better understanding of each agencies responsibilities and capabilities,” McLeod said. “First responders now have a better idea of what health workers can do and will do in similar events; not everyone knew that before the drill.”

The exercise was paid for by a Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Grant through North Carolina Emergency Management.

## **Brown Creek Correctional Institution Prepares for Disaster**

*By Steve Powers, NCEM area coordinator*

Employees of Brown Creek Correctional Institution in Polkton joined local and state emergency managers June 1 to test their emergency response capabilities. More than 40 first responders, emergency management officials and corrections staff participated in the full-scale exercise which involved mass casualties resulting from an active shooter and fire at the medium and minimum security facilities within the prison.

Five county emergency management coordinators evaluated the drill assessing first responder operations, pre-hospital triage, treatment and transportation of casualties and implementation of an incident command structure. Rodney Diggs, Roylin Hammond, Shane Seagroves and Scot Brooks critiqued both responders and facility procedures.

Other agencies participating in the exercise included Anson County EMS and 911 Center, Polkton Fire Department, American Red Cross –Union and Anson county chapter, State Highway Patrol and NCEM.



*Frank Speer, nursing supervisor at the Brown Creek Correctional Institution, treats a wounded correctional officer as part of the mass casualty exercise at the prison.*

Designed according to HSEEP methodologies and criteria, the evaluation results will provide BCCI an opportunity to identify ways to build on existing strengths and improve capabilities.

Similar to other state and local agencies, the Division of Adult Corrections is required to conduct a disaster drill annually to assess and improve their response during emergency situations.

## Moore County Animal Response Team Tests Their Plan

*By Steve Powers, NCEM area coordinator*

Moore County emergency response agencies tested the animal operations portion of their emergency operations plan May 25.

More than 100 staff and volunteers from Moore County Emergency Management, the American Red Cross and County Animal Response Team set up and operated a co-location pet shelter specifically designed to house disaster survivors and their pets on the same campus.



*An animal shelter worker checks in a disaster survivor and his 'pet' as part of the animal shelter operations exercise in Moore County. Volunteers used stuffed animals to represent pets for the exercise.*

Local volunteers, who served as disaster survivors, arrived with their pseudo pets at the Southern Middle School shelter in Southern

Pines. After checking in at a human shelter, staffed by the Moore County Department of Social Services and American Red Cross, pet owners were directed to another part of the school set up for the animals. The nearby companion animal shelter was operated by county animal control and CART members. As part of the drill, staff also provided tours of the animal emergency hospital and boarding facility that would serve as an alternate care provider for small and large animals should Moore County have a disaster that stretched abilities of local veterinarians.

“One of the things we know about disasters is that folks often do not evacuate when instructed to because they are worried about their pets,” said Scot Brooks, Moore County emergency manager. “Our county is fortunate to have people who are interested in pets and animal welfare during disasters. Exercises like this give our CART members valuable experience and training.”

County staff prepared for the drill by conducting an educational seminar for local veterinarians, CART volunteers, animal rescue groups and other agencies.

## Grants for CERT

*By Patty Moore, NCEM CERT coordinator*

NCEM's Community Emergency Response Team office will offer grants to local CERT programs in the near future. Grants will be available for training and public education items, as well as equipment that will help sustain local programs and encourage recruitment. Formal notification and full details of the grant will be distributed in the next few months. Details of the grant process (funding amounts, deadlines, etc.) will be released at that time.

In the meantime, local chapters can take several steps to ensure they are eligible for grant funds.

**1. Register on the national CERT website.** Be sure contact information is current. If your team is not listed on the national CERT registry, do so now. Local programs will NOT be eligible for grants if they are not registered. Only teams that are listed on the registry will even be notified about grant availability.

**2. Start preparing now.** Make a list of items that would assist your program, like training supplies and promotional/public educational items. That way, when the grant information is sent out, most of your work will be done.

**3. Pass this information on.** Every CERT program could be eligible for this grant, so pass this on to every team you know. Even if you think they will get this message, please tell them anyway. We all want monetary support, but we also want to support our neighboring teams that we may need assistance from in the future.

## Spotlight on Andrew Langan

*By Julia Jarema, NCDPS Communications*

Like many employees, Andrew came to North Carolina Emergency Management from a military background. He served six years in the Army and was stationed in northeast Uganda as part of a civil affairs team for a year.

There, his team had a two-fold mission: to increase the national security capacity and improve local veterinary practices. From 2008-2009, Andrew worked as part of a five-man team training the military of the Uganda People's Defense Force. Because Uganda has an agriculturally-based economy, another critical part of the Army's mission was to improve veterinary practices. So Army veterinarians provided advice to native vets on the latest vaccinations and techniques to improve the health and productivity of the livestock, primarily cattle and goats. They also built dams for agricultural production and consumption.

After his deployment, this Elkton, Maryland native followed the path of his sister and parents who had already relocated to the Triangle area. Upon his return to civilian life in early 2010, he started his master's degree program in homeland security through the American Military University. Andrew completed his master's program and submitted his thesis last month. During his studies, one of his interests was developing an understanding of critical infrastructure and vulnerabilities in order to mitigate threats by adjusting architectural design. The topic seemed to be a natural extension of his undergraduate degree in architecture from the University of Maryland. And it would prove to be a valuable asset for his responsibilities as one of NCEM's planners.



Since joining NCEM in November 2010, Andrew has overseen updates to the State Homeland Security Strategy Report which evaluates natural and man-made threats and current capabilities and prioritizes planned initiatives to address the state's level of preparedness. He also has managed and updated the state preparedness report.

"The relationships are what I've enjoyed most about being part of emergency management," explained Langan. "Whether it's getting to know colleagues better during those long shifts in activations or working with our partners and stakeholders during the strategic planning



process, the people are the most rewarding part of my job.”

Langan said he also appreciated be able to discover and learn more about different parts of the state during his business travels.

Last November, Andrew and his wife, Michelle, married at a small, Catholic church in Swannanoa surrounded by a few dozen family and friends. The newlyweds share a strong faith and passion for running.



## Showcasing North Carolina's Artistic Talent

A special thank you goes out to the 18 counties that submitted art featuring local attractions and glimpses into regional culture.

Pieces range from photo collages, to carved wooden masks to a Bob Timberlake print.

“There are so many unique qualities, areas and attractions in North Carolina, so it’s inspiring to see so many different artworks that reflect that talent,” said NCEM Director Doug Hoell. “The display has become an inspiration to all who work and visit here; it’s a real conversation starter.”

If your county is interested in submitting art for the collection, contact Julia Jarema at 919-825-2270 or [julia.jarema@ncdps.gov](mailto:julia.jarema@ncdps.gov).

## Staffing Changes

### Joining the Community

**Brian Barnes** – is the new Search and Rescue Coordinator for NCEM. Barnes joined the NCEM planning section in February 2011.

**Neil Cole** – began May 25 as a community development specialist in the Public Assistance Section.

**Cherelle James** – began as the assistant manager for NCEM’s Human Services program May 31. James served as an Individual Assistance program reservist and has a criminal justice and business background.

**Mike Long** – was hired as the new Burke County Emergency Management Director. Mike is the former assistant fire marshal.

**Philip Triplet** –started June 4 as a community development specialist in the Individual Assistance Section.

### Saying Goodbye

**Frank Davis** - resigned effective May 4 and has relocated to Virginia with his family.

**Wayne Pearce** – retired as a senior emergency management specialist from New Hanover County Emergency Management after more than 26 years of service.

**Mark Pitts** – retired as Burke County Emergency Management Director.

**Rachael Tovey**- who has served as a NCEM field planner, resigned effective May 18 to relocate to Chicago with her husband.



*The mEMO is produced monthly as a joint publication by North Carolina Emergency Management, a division of the N.C. Department of Public Safety, and the N.C. Emergency Management Association. Comments and suggestions can be forwarded to [Julia.Jarema@ncdps.gov](mailto:Julia.Jarema@ncdps.gov)*